

Silver Spring Citizens Advisory Board Meetings
Minutes
July 14, 2008

Members: Alan Bowser, Marilyn Seitz, Lucinda Lessley, Mark Woodard, Megan Moriarty, Kathy Stevens, Phil Olivetti, Mitch Warren, Mary Pat Spon, Evan Glass, Deborah Linn, and Victor Weissberg

Members Absent: Darian Unger, Tiffany Graham-Golden, Cassandra Ford, Jerry Yokoyama, Fran Rothstein, Debbie Spielberg

Call to Order and Introduction: Kathy Stevens Executive Vice-Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. members and attendees introduced themselves.

Approval of Minutes: The Silver Spring Citizens Advisory Board approved the June 9, 2008 minutes.

Community Comments

Marcie Stickle, commented for the record: The Silver Spring Historical Society has put out a call, an "In Search Of," for information, photographs, documents, artifacts, advertisements, etc. of African-American independent businesses in Silver Spring's Central Business District from 1900s through 1975; through outreach by community list serves and through the Gazette's "Names & Places" column by Agnes Jasinski and Mike Menno, which will be repeated again very soon. Silver Spring is so fortunate to have Mr. Jim Dandy, also Reverend Dandy, and his wife's long-lived small independent business, "Jim Dandy Bridal and Formal Wear, Tuxedos, Wedding Gowns, Gowns for Bridesmaids, Flowergirls, and Mothers, Dry Cleaning, Notary," in Fenton Village, 961 Bonifant Street, 2 doors down from Pennyworth Thrift Shop, 301-585-6810, Open 7:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. Please patronize Jim & Doreen's wonderful shop, and drop by to chat with the wonderful Reverend Dandy, he must have a photographic memory also a wonderful raconteur. Jim Dandy came to the D.C. area in 1935 from South Carolina, set up his shop in 1972 (on the now abandoned Pershing Drive across from the Silver Spring Armory). Jim and his wife reside in Long Branch, Silver Spring.

Directors Report

Gary Stith reported that:

- The first of three meetings for the community to talk with the Department of Libraries about the Program of Requirements for the new Silver Spring Library is on July 15, at the Silver Spring Library. The other two meetings are scheduled for Saturday, August 23, from 10 a.m. to noon, at the Round House Theater, 8641 Colesville Rd; and Sunday, September 21, from 2 to 4 p.m., at the Coffield Community Center, 2450 Lyttonsville, Road.

- Friday, July 25, Party on the Green called “*Sign of the Times.*” We will unveil the construction sign for the project and have entertainment.
- We are looking at dates to schedule the Civic Building Groundbreaking. Construction should start by the end of August assuming County Council gives us the Supplemental Appropriation. We were asked not to fence off the turf until the last week of August when Montgomery County Schools open.
- The Silver Spring Citizens Advisory Board, Neighborhoods Committee and Silver Spring Urban District Advisory Board will **not meet in August.**

Chairs Report

Kathy Stevens, Executive Vice Chair reported on behalf of Darian Unger, Chair the following summary:

- Met with Council Member Leventhal last month and with Council Member Praisner last week to re-introduce them to our board, to let them know about the issues we identified as important, and to give them a heads-up about our concerns, including funding for capital projects, Fenton Village development, and the library.
- Scheduled mid-day meetings with Valerie Ervin and Mark Elrich next week...please email if you would like to join or if you have a particular concern you would like me to discuss with them.
- On behalf of our board, I testified in front of county council last week to oppose ambulance fees and discuss points from the letter that we wrote on this subject earlier this year.
- Several committee meetings dealt with the sudden and unfortunate news that the bids came in high for both the Silver Spring transit center and the civic building/Veterans Plaza complex. These are the paramount issues for today’s meeting and tomorrow’s County Council testimony.
 - The County Executive is requesting that Council appropriate \$16.72 million extra for the transit center and \$2.5 million extra for the Civic Building/Veteran’s Plaza in order to continue construction.
 - I have already started writing testimony requesting full funding for these projects, although if Kathy is reading this, then she is likely to be the one delivering the testimony tomorrow afternoon. I expect it will be modified to reflect the discussion we have tonight...please let her know if you think I/she should weigh both projects equally, or give more weight to one or the other.
 - Please also consider whether we should be supporting the Planning Board’s request for even more funds than the County Executive requested – his supplemental request does not include the essential elements that our Board and the Planning Board had deemed important.
 - Don’t leave Kathy to do all the work – if you support full funding, please write an independent email to county council tonight after the meeting.
 - Make sure to ask Gary some tough questions about the capital project funding mess...the details are important.
- Thanks to Jerry and Mitch for offering to take leading roles on the Silver Spring library issue. The first public meeting on the Program of Requirements is tomorrow (Tuesday) at 7:00 in the Silver Spring Library.

- We need another committee chair and more committee attendance. Committees are where we get most of our community input, where we do our best outreach, where we learn and investigate community issues, and where we actually do the most work....please keep them active.
- One thing we are going to pilot in the fall is having Committee meeting once a month and if some topic warrants it have a broader meeting and invite community members. Skipping the Committee meetings for that month and have a broader exchange making sure that we have as many stakeholders as possible in one place to discuss an issue. Deborah Linn is helping coordinate the forum on Fenton Village Development for October.

Follow-up on Board Retreat

Kathy Stevens reported that:

Some of the suggestions in the Retreat summary can be easily implemented at least on a pilot basis to see how they play into the process and if all members agree we can try these out starting in September. For instance some of the suggestions and actions items that I think would be easy to implement are as follows:

Use ground rules for every meeting (see the list below).

- At our meetings, the Board should review the timing of the agenda (as set by the executive committee) and approve it. The Board should use a timekeeper (perhaps the Parliamentary VP?) to enforce the allocated time. There should be 5 minutes included for chatting, updates, socialization.
- Consider shortening the time of the full Board meeting. Keep the meeting focused.
- Minutes from all the committee meetings should have a summary on the front page. The summary should list 1) the issue, 2) the recommendation and 3) the action. Committee reports/minutes should announce accomplishments so that the Board has a sense of what we're accomplishing.
- One person should be assigned to follow up for each letter written – to monitor the issue until some sort of resolution.
- Pick a date for the retreat (for example, the first Saturday in May), and write it into the bylaws.
- Rotate who runs the Board meetings. This way more people will experience and appreciate how to maintain the various ground rules and goals.
- As part of a decision making process, always review obstacles and barriers (for example, limited number of time and volunteers).
- At every meeting what has been accomplished.

Action items:

1. *Action needed:* Decide how library issue will be handled – by the committees or by a special task force.
2. *Possible action:* Consider canceling some committee meetings if there is a library special task force in an effort to be mindful that we are volunteers and have limited time.
3. *Action needed:* Are there other issues that the Board would like to pursue actively this year?
4. *Action needed:* Exec committee needs to outline goals for the coming year and have them approved by the Board. Retreat participants identified 2 goals for the coming year: 1) Library 2)

Improve communication among ourselves and others – this is part of our being a conduit of information.

5. *Upcoming Action:* An outreach task force, Kathy, Cassandra, Megan, Mary Pat with Vic as the strategic plan link, will review: What's working? What's not working? Here's our "how" list – what we hope to do.
6. *Ongoing action:* Recruit great members for the Board to be our successors.

Discussion:

Lucinda Lessley wanted to know what the link was between the outreach committee and the strategic plan.

Kathy Stevens stated that there are a number of links between the proposed strategic plan in terms of additional outreach and communication and what the task force set-up last year and we thought we could crystallize some of what is already in the strategic plan.

Lucinda Lessley stated that she thought the strategic plan was important and wanted to assist in advancing the process along.

Deborah Linn stated that there is a proposal at meetings the Board vote letters up or down. One of the biggest complaints is the editing of letters at meetings. Draft letters are e-mailed in advance and members have an opportunity to contact the writer if they have objections. If there are soft editorial comments discuss them after the meeting. The constant word smithing of letters is not a useful function for anybody. I would like to know if the Board members would like to agree and follow this suggestion.

Mitch Warren responded that some letters are regarding major issues and the Board needs time to debate. Other letters are of minor issues which we seem to spend way too much time in discussion on the phraseology of the letter.

Deborah Linn stated word smithing is the issue and not the discussion of whether the Board should support or not support the letter.

Kathy Steven stated that the Board should handle these issues in a uniformed manner and asked if there was any of the suggestions or action items that members felt as written they would object to trying for three months. We can try out the things we thought were good suggestions and see how they work instead of voting on each individually. Are there any items members have objections to or think we should table trying out until January or another appropriate time?

Phil Olivetti responded his concern about suggestion 10: Rotate who runs the Board meetings.

Mary Pat Spon stated the recommendation was not rotating who served as Chair but that we rotate a facilitator role of checking with the timekeeper, making sure we stay on topic and focused on the specific agenda items.

Kathy Stevens responded that the Chair will talk to someone to designate ahead of time that they are going to help facilitate the meeting and help us to stay on track.

Megan Moriarty asked for clarification of suggestion 12: At every meeting what has been accomplished.

Kathy Steven responded that Suggestion 12 is to reserve a few minutes at the end of each meeting whether it is a Board or Committee meetings to sum up the major points and if there are major action items and who needs to do what as a follow-up.

Kathy Stevens stated that she would pass the information on to Darian Unger, Chair and he will work with someone different at each meeting to help facilitate. Hearing no other questions or objections I will report to Darian that the Board agrees these are good ideas to test out.

Supplemental Funding for Silver Spring Projects, Silver Spring Transit Center and Silver Spring Civic Building

Don Scheuerman reported that:

Starting July 1, Montgomery County Department of Public Works and Transportation reorganized. The new department will consist of five divisions: Transportation Engineering (capital transportation projects), Traffic Engineering and Operations (signs, signals, pavement markings, etc.), Parking Management (parking garages, meters, permits, etc.), Transit Services (Ride On, taxi regulation, etc.), and Highway Services (road or sidewalk repairs, grass mowing, tree maintenance, etc.).

Gary Stith stated information is in the packet about the \$16.72 million dollars worth of additional funds requested for the Silver Spring Transit Center project. Royce Hanson, Chair of the Planning Board has concerns about items removed from the project as a part of the deduct alternates and the County Executive is not asking for funding on those. There is a letter from the County Executive to Council President describing what was removed and there are twelve items that had been included in an agreement with Park and Planning and it describes which ones were included in the Request for Funding and which ones were not. There is a significant amount of Federal and State funds being leveraged by the County funds which is a big reason to provide the additional funding. This facility will be critical to the future transit services in downtown Silver Spring. The Transit Center accommodates the Purple Line alignment and allows it to be added to the project later on. It connects to the Capital Crescent and Metropolitan Branch Trails, adds Greyhound and Peter Pan service, bike lockers, transit service office that sells transit fare, security office, enhance access by pedestrian and access for the buses and they will come in off of Colesville and Ramsey on two different locations on two different levels.

Don Scheuerman stated that the County Executive sent his recommendations over to Council President and describes the drawings as follows:

- Page one shows the proposed center as it is going to be funded for the 16.72 million dollars and the next page includes items that would require the additional funding. The Silver Spring standard streetscape along Colesville is included, installation of the Silver Spring light fixtures and breakaway concrete for the future brick sidewalk requested by Park and Planning. We are putting in the Silver Spring standard lighting on the top deck

which is the 350 level and on the Ramsey access road that takes the buses to the second level. The other requirement by Park and Planning is they want two pours of concrete, there is the bond break and the concrete surface so that in the future the top concrete surface can be removed and replaced with the standard brick the cost is \$55,000 and was not supported. The Commission on Disabilities is actively working hard to try and change the entire design of our city sidewalks. Brick sidewalks create impairment for mobility and visually impaired people because they are never absolutely flat. They have sent a letter to Royce Hanson, Chairman, Park and Planning and are actively trying to prevent bricks from being used as a primary surface this was not supported in this arrangement.

- Stamped modified asphalt crosswalks can be done anytime and does not have to be associated with the Transit Center at this time. It also does not provide any enhanced pedestrian safety it was not supported in the funding request because it can be done later.
- The canopy at the entrance to the Metro Station and please note there has been no canopy since the Metro opened in 1978 and it is something that can be added at a later date if funding where available and is a significant amount of money and is not included in the cost.
- The stairs and escalators enclosures for escalators 1& 2 and stairs 1 and 5 have metal panels associated with it and is probably 80% glass versus 100% glass so the canopy are a mix metal and glass and we will have a better rendering but the all glass enclosures where not supported and we are sticking with the base design.
- Green Roof is included.
- Additional escalator south end requested by WMATA and at the center core space is provided for a future escalator. The specified escalators, elevators and stairs provide adequate user mobility for the facility. The need for the escalator may become necessity in the future with additional pedestrian traffic expected when the Ripley District and South Silver are developed. Provisions have been made in the base contract to allow for this element to be added after completion of construction therefore it is not supported in the appropriation.
- The additional stairs go from the green roof down and next to the MTA area on the second level we do have that mobility in the facility and an additional access in the future when the Ripley District and South Silver Spring develop. We made provisions in the design to add later and therefore it is not included.
- There are three elevators in the facility and two towers at either end between level two and three. They have two cabs on the south end and one cab and an empty slot on the north end so in the future if WMATA finds the three elevators are insufficient a fourth elevator can be added.
- The relocation of the transit store. On the second level we envisioned an MTA and intercity bus and worked with WMATA on this. Park and Planning's position is that the store serves as a vital edge. In the renderings the metro is located in the upper left hand corner southwest from the Bennington. There are three facilities proposed by the private developer, hotel, residential and a second residential once they submit we will know exactly what they are submitting and there is discussion about converting the one residential potentially to an office. The South Silver Spring Civic Association wrote a letter to Park and Planning suggesting they allow the building to be taller and more development. These are the twelve items and the two that are probably of greatest

concern to Park and Planning is their preference in having the transit store in the front plaza, the canopy over the entrance to help identify the entrance. Another part of it is to try and tie the architecture of the new transit center with the old metro station.

Discussion:

Mark Woodard asked when ground was going to be broken, estimated date of completion and is the money secure and committed by Federal, State and County Governments to actually build this and on time.

Don Scheuerman responded the ability to start work depends on receiving funding and the fact that we are not allowed to sign a contract unless all funds are available. If Council approves the Supplemental Appropriation we are looking at starting early September 2008, 26 months of construction, and completion by October 2010. The Federal dollars are secure and the State monies are available. The total Federal and State contribution is about \$66 million and the difference is made up by the County which is around \$22 or \$23 million dollars.

Alan Bowser stated his concern was the Chairman's letter to the Council President on June 27. The letter states that the Chairman is unhappy with what Department General Services and the County Executive put forward. The theme of the letter is the cut in funding recommended by the County Executive will affect design excellence the cost to bring it up to design excellence is \$1.3 million dollars. As we move forward with projects like the library and Fenton Village, design excellence is something we need to pay close attention to and hope that this Board and Council will look favorably on responding to Park and Planning's recommendations specifically because they traded some land for getting extra consideration of design excellence.

Don Scheuerman responded they traded a surface easement and there was no fee simple property transferred. The park area they had was the urban park which is located between the two bus loops. In exchange for that the transit plaza which is significantly improved and we are building the Gene Lynch Urban Park. We worked together with the Park and Planning Board to make sure that the Urban Park is extraordinary. We had a hearing and the Board had nothing but praise on what was being proposed for those park areas.

Civic Building Update

Don Scheuerman reported that:

- We were required to go through Optional Method review and plans were submitted in January 23, 2007, accepted by the Board February 9, 2007. The Design Review Committee (DRC) staff recommended eliminating the plaza, ice skating rink and pavilion. We had a Board hearing on June 7 and the Board found the design as presented by the County was proper and voted unanimously to support the County in going forward with the plaza, ice skating rink and pavilion. November 15, 2007 we received the Board resolution and that was the first step in getting the actual signed signature set of approved plans and finished April 18, 2008. This was a long process and you can not get a building permit until the process is complete. Bid process began in late December received bids in March.
- We received four bids narrowed them down to three and have been in negotiations. We are looking forward to getting a contract signed once we receive the \$2.5 supplemental.

The supplemental request is because of the time it has taken for the project and the cost of materials has spiraled.

Kathy Stevens stated that she would give testimony on behalf of the Board to Council on these projects. We had discussion at the Executive Committee on how to strategically approach these issues. The Transit Center has a lot of Federal and State funding that has been committed while the Civic Building is relatively smaller.

Phil Olivetti stated the Board can not back away from supporting full funding for both projects that are central to Silver Spring.

Alan Bowser stated the draft testimony was fine and asked that a sentence be added that the Board does believe in design excellence for new projects in Silver Spring.

Motion: The Silver Spring Citizens Advisory Board agreed to the general approach of the testimony with the specifics Alan Bowser suggestion in terms of design excellence for all new projects in Silver Spring. (*See informational materials finalized testimony*)

Councilmember Marc Elrich reported that:

- It is not important to worry about the Library versus Civic Center because all these things need to happen. To put this in perspective the \$16 million dollars is the equivalent of what we put in for all the neglected Afro American Recreation Centers in the County and you are competing against them when discussing projects and money. We do have a real capital shortfall in general.
- Fenton Village - I have tried to get the developer and the people in the neighborhood to talk and deal with the Zoning Text Amendment.
- Five Councilmember's signed a letter stating that we don't want just a ZTA but the Sector Plan redone. We have a proposal from Rollin Stanley, Park and Parking to do the Sector Plan in six months or less for the Fenton Village piece only and that includes the zoning code language. There are still multiple problems even if the ZTA passes there is a possibility that the Planning Board would reject it for non-conformance with the Master Plan.
- I propose modifying the ZTA to basically solidify the 60 feet on Fenton, allow 90 feet for mid-block and 110 feet at Mayors Lane and after discussion with the developer he can get all these affordable units and do what he needs in the complex.
- I've talked with folks from the Neighborhood Associations about keeping the massing further away trying to avoid the density from Fenton and they like the stepping back.
- The issues are set-backs from Fenton some stepping along the side streets, getting something at the mid-block connection and possible green space in the interior of the block. Mr. Hillerson changed the way he will orient the project toward Fenton Avenue because the East Silver folks were concerned that they could not enter the project from Fenton. Mr. Hillerson has taken something similar to the new project at the end of Bethesda Road where they have archways on the buildings and retail on the pedestrian street. I will try and craft a Sector Plan Amendment to make sure whatever can happen will happen. Rollin Stanley, Park and Planning design concept has the library facing

Fenton Village. There is complexity in how things get built and how quickly they are completed.

Alan Bowser asked about the Live Nation Entertainment Center stating that it is an important project for Silver Spring and to activate Colesville Road and Fenton Street on the other side. The Board hopes we can get Council's support for whatever ZTA is needed to move forward.

Elrich responded that the ZTA presents problems the way it is written and hopefully folks will continue to discuss some of the issues raised by the ZTA and not make this an all or nothing deal. This is between the developer and everybody else but they are asking extraordinary terms that you would not extend to anybody else and there is a question as whether it is good to go that far. It is not worth going further than we normally go because this is an amenity provided on the front side and we don't normally ask that of anybody. There has been some communication for some flexibility and hopefully people are taken that seriously. It would be a good idea for the Board to support doing the rapid Sector Plan Amendment which requires five votes from Council.

Deborah Linn invited Marc Elrich to a Forum on Fenton Village, October 15 sponsored by the Board.

Urban District Advisory Committee discussion

Mary Pat Spon reported that on page 46 of the packet is a letter from the Silver Spring Urban District Advisory Committee (UDAC) to the County Executive regarding the library. Stating that this is a complicated and challenging issue that we need to re-evaluate and update the Program of Requirements, (POR). At the UDAC meeting the discussion was around size issues and whether or not the site itself would be sufficient to support a library that would fully serve the community. The real focus of the letter is how to get the library moving and built so it won't take another 10 years.

The UDAC recommendation is to have all stakeholders at the table and that the County Executive establishes a Library Steering Committee to evaluate and recommend a resolution to issues concerning the development of the new Silver Spring Library and the Library Site mixed use development. UDAC recommends that the steering committee be composed of project stakeholders including: Silver Spring Citizens Advisory Board, Silver Spring Urban District Advisory Committee, Community for a New Silver Spring Library and the Silver Spring Library Advisory Committee, Silver Spring Chamber of Commerce, Pyramid Atlantic, Montgomery County Government officials including representation from the County Executive office, Department of Libraries, Department of General Services. In the letter the five key issues that need to be addressed are updating Library POR with appropriate community input, reviewing the Purple Line station requirements, site impact, identifying the affordable residential development requirements, developing the design charrette process and establishing a meaningful development

project schedule. I would like to know if this Board agrees with the UDAC letter and whether we want to write a follow-up letter in support.

Alan Bowser stated there are two people from this Board working on the library issue so we could easily have representation on the Committee that the UDAC is proposing. I am a member of the New Silver Spring Library and others can join if they are interested in being involved.

Kathy Steven stated there are two different schools of thought that have been proposed. A group like this could close down community input and the other thought is if you have the right people in the group that are willing to do the outreach and bring the discussion to the table you can actually increase community input to the process to one group and have them be able to reinvigorate the process and this is the decision we need to make as a Board do we want to be a part of this. Mitch Warren and Jerry Yokoyama volunteered to work on this and I don't know if one of them would like to be a representative to this group if we endorse this.

Mitch Warren responded the two issues are we want more community input and get the Library moving. I want to better understand the balance between the two.

Deborah Linn stated she was in favor of this because this is one way to get everybody to know what everyone else is thinking and hopefully moving in the same direction.

Motion: (Seitz, Olivetti) the Silver Spring Citizens Advisory Board unanimously agreed to support the Silver Spring Urban District Advisory Committee letter regarding the new Library and having representation on the Library Steering Committee.

Kathy Stevens asked Mary Pat Spon to do whatever was needed to pass this on to Jon Lourie and the County Executive.

Transportation and Pedestrian Safety Committee

The minutes are on page 49.

Neighborhoods Committee

Alan Bowser reported that:

The meeting was devoted to the library issue and I have included correspondences for future reference. The next meeting is July 21 and our guest will be Laura Lynch, Assistant States Attorney with responsibility for Silver Spring and Community Prosecutor. We may have Seth Grimes from the Old Takoma Park Foundation to discuss some emerging issues between Silver Spring and Takoma Park.

CED Committee

Phil Olivetti reported the last meeting report is on page 71 of the packet and if you have questions I will answer them. The next meeting is on July 16 and topic of discussion will be the October Forum on Fenton Village.

Pyramid Atlantic Update

Helen Frederick, Founder of Pyramid Atlantic stated that they have been in operation for six year and are located on Ripley and Georgia. We realized we needed to reach out to our community and opened Pyramid Atlantic Community Arts Store at 924 Ellsworth. In September we will be moving to 823 Wayne, right across the street from Whole Foods and between Hollywood Video and Next Day Blinds. The store showcases affordable prints and artist books, handmade paper, and the work of local painters, ceramicists, jewelers and as well as other artists and crafters. The store also features a gallery with rotating works on display. Profits from sales at the store will benefit local artists and the arts programs at Pyramid Atlantic.

Meeting adjourned

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